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HUNGARIAN MILITARY ACTIVITIES AND SABOTAGE
REPORTED IN YUGOSLAV PRESS

The following information on Hungarian rearming, maneuvers, mili-
 tary preparations along the Yugoslav border, sabotage of Hungarian
 factories, and stealing by Soviet troops in Hungary was reported in
 Yugoslav daily newspapers between 29 June and 20 July 1952.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

Maneuvers

Southern Hungary, from Lake Balaton to the Drava River and Szeged, has re-
 cently been made into a large military area. Five Hungarian divisions are now
 concentrated in areas near the Yugoslav border, in such places as Kiskunhalas,
 Baja, Pecs, Nagykanizsa, and Barcs. Units are being regularly transferred from
 one place to another and stationed in camps such as those usually built prior
 to large-scale military maneuvers. In 1950 and 1951, the area bounded by Kis-
 kunhalas, Janoshalma and Melykut near the Yugoslav border was used for large-
 scale maneuvers (1), with the mission of "pursuing and destroying the enemy on
 his own territory". (2) Preparations for similar maneuvers are under way this
 year. (1) Soviet officers will be in command; officers and units from Cominform
 countries will participate. According to some reports, Czechoslovak and Polish
 units have already arrived in Hungary. (2)

Rearmament

Rebuilding and expanding existing transportation routes and building new
 ones has been especially intensive in Hungary lately. Construction has been
 intensified on a modern road between Budapest, Pecs, and Mohacs, which is des-
 tined for exclusive military use. The completion date has been moved up 2
 months from the original one set for the end of 1952. The 20-meter-wide road
 is being built with a solid bed and a load-bearing layer of concrete expected
 to carry military vehicles weighing up to 80 tons. Plans for the road were
 worked out in the Hungarian Ministry of National Defense; construction of the

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road is being supervised by experienced engineers. Even though the work has been progressing rapidly, measures have been taken to complete the work still more quickly. An old stone highway, satisfactory for normal transportation, is in the immediate vicinity of the new road.

Many existing highways are being rebuilt in Hungary, while communications between the USSR and Hungary are being expanded separately. The Zahony-Debrecen-Bekescsaba-Szeged road from the Soviet border, the Bereg-Miskolc-Gyongyos-Budapest road, and the Debrecen-Solnok-Budapest road (parallel to the latter) are being rebuilt to carry increased traffic and to make possible the rapid movement of armament to the Yugoslav border.

Similar work is proceeding on Hungarian railroads. A broad-gauge railroad line between Miskolc and Budapest, which will facilitate the movement of Soviet arms to the center of the Great Hungarian Plain, is being planned.

Air force development occupies a special place in the arming of Hungary. Several modern airfields are under construction. A large military airfield with concrete runways has been built along the Danube River between Dunafoldvar and Paks, about 150 kilometers from the Yugoslav border; Soviet technicians supervised its construction. A large military airfield whose entire base [runways only?] is of concrete is being built in Somogy Megye, near Taszar. Barracks for air force personnel are also being built. A similar airfield is being built in Szekesfehervar, while an airfield at Szombathely has been finished. A large Soviet airfield which is under construction in northwestern Hungary near Sopron is already being used by Soviet heavy bombers and fighter aircraft. Although local manpower is being used, most of the airfield construction is being done by so-called labor battalions composed of politically unreliable persons who have been pressed into service. It is estimated that there are now 15-20 such battalions in Hungary.

Underground telegraph and telephone cables are being installed in Hungary. A separate cable line is being laid from Pecs to Dombovar and Kaposvar.

The reorganization and expansion of Hungarian war industry has made significant changes in economic activity planned 2 or 3 years ago. A number of factories being built for military needs exclusively will fill present Hungarian armament requirements. A war materials factory is being built in Sajobabony, near Fuzfo; almost 12,000 workers are employed at the building site. According to some reports, part of a tank factory in Dunszentmiklos was put in operation in November 1951. A new war materials factory was recently opened in Bekescsaba.

The Inota Factory is being built near Szekesfehervar to produce aircraft. Aircraft parts are being manufactured in an aluminum factory in the same town. Light arms are being produced in the Lampagyar Enterprise in Budapest. A large ammunition factory with underground installations, which was built in Jobbagyi between Hatvan and Salgotarjan, began operating in August 1951, giving priority to artillery ammunition. Workers who built the factory have been transferred to Felnetmet, near Eger, where they are building a new military enterprise.

Hungarian war industry now produces light arms, ammunition, small-caliber gun barrels, and tank and aircraft parts. The two last-named items are being produced in Csepel, where there are indications that jet aircraft will also be assembled.

According to official Hungarian reports, the present expenditures for military requirements are nine times larger than in 1948. In 1948, the budget provided for the expenditure of 600 million forints for military needs, while in 1952, it provides for 5,910,000,000 forints.(1)

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Hungary is steadily increasing the number of personnel under arms by forming new units.(2) In 1949, Hungary had four infantry divisions (this exceeded the number permitted by the peace treaty), which were later increased to seven and then 13 divisions. In 1952, Hungary has formed 14-15 infantry divisions, three armored divisions, and two to three air force divisions; two tank and nearly two air force divisions are being organized. Air force divisions each have about 40-50 jet aircraft.(1) The number of personnel in the army, border troops, and units of the state security administration has increased by 500 percent over 1948, while the number of operational units has increased eight-fold.

The Hungarian Army is steadily becoming more proficient technically.(2) Training of officer cadres is becoming more and more intensive. Hungary has two military academies and over 40 diversified military schools and training courses. New officers are being assigned to expanding military units. The training of Hungarian officers is similar in method to that in the USSR.(4) All military training in Hungary is concentrated on offense.

The special political education imposed on Hungarian military units keeps the soldiers in a state of constant insecurity and fear of war.(1) The army is systematically conducting psychological and political preparations for an aggressive war. The Hungarian soldier is being trained to hate Yugoslavia.(2) Hungarian officers are constantly telling the soldiers that Hungary is threatened by attack from Yugoslavia, and that they must discipline themselves to be prepared and armed accordingly.(1) Soldiers are told that the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia is persecuted and oppressed, and that the mission of the Hungarian Army is to liberate this oppressed minority.(2)

Hungarian Fortifications

Hungarian soldiers have recently been extending fortifications on the Yugoslav border. On 14 July, trucks and carts brought building materials, including brick, up to the old Tisza River bed area southwest of Szeged. Hungarian border guards have moved two observation posts up to the wire which extends along the entire Yugoslav-Hungarian border. The wire has been there for some time.

Soldiers are building bunkers in the forest near the border.(3) Fortifications are being built as points of departure for attack. Hungarian units regularly camp in the Yugoslav border area, and Hungarian government agencies and members of the army daily create incidents on the Yugoslav border.(2) Frequent flights over the Yugoslav border are being made by modern Hungarian military aircraft (1) photographing Yugoslav territory.(2)

Arrest of Officers

Widespread purges have been carried out recently in the higher ranks of the Hungarian Army. Many officers have been removed from the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff, and mass arrests have been made. Several trials of officers suspected of being disloyal to the Hungarian government have been held before military courts in Budapest. Over 100 officers were sentenced, charged with being "foreign [bourgeois?] elements."(4)

Sabotage

A considerable number of Hungarian industrial enterprises have recently been damaged so much that production in some factories has been halted completely. Most of the damage has been caused by fires, whose incidence has increased, particularly in Budapest industrial enterprises, which are among the most modern in Hungary.

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Among the large industrial installations, the AFORT Petroleum Refinery in Csepel was the first to burn down. The fire occurred on the afternoon of 6 April and lasted until the following forenoon. Large petroleum tanks exploded during the fire. In Csepel, it was later said that the fire resulted from sabotage and that some officials of the refinery had been arrested.

On the afternoon of 13 April, a fire occurred in Ujpest in the leather factory which is located in the same block as the "Kender-Jutagyar" Hemp and Jute Factory. The fire could not be extinguished, and the equipment, finished goods, and raw materials in both factories were completely destroyed. Only the walls were left standing. As soon as the fire started, Matyas Rakosi arrived on the scene with the Hungarian Minister of Defense and about 150 members of the Security Service. The inhabitants later commented that Rakosi had said the fire was the result of sabotage. Local inhabitants report there was enough military clothing and other military equipment in the leather factory to supply the Hungarian Army for a year.

On 14 April, on Vaci Street, Budapest, the largest furniture factory in that city was burned completely; the agricultural machinery factory on the same street suffered extensive damage, and the tar factory on Foti Street was the third factory to burn that day. After the fires, police searched homes, inspected identity cards, and made many arrests.

The Hungarian press did not report any of these fires; it said they were the result of sabotage and the resistance of workers who are dissatisfied with their present situation. The Hungarian police and Security Service have adopted extremely severe measures to keep such incidents from becoming known to the public.(5)

Robbery by Soviet Soldiers

Four armed Soviet soldiers [recently?] sought lodging for the night in Sándor Balinta's home, located in Jüta near Kaposvár. When they had eaten, they tied up the villager and his wife, and stole clothing, food, and 1,700 forints in cash. Balinta's 16-year-old son escaped and sought help from the local police, but they refused to intervene. They sent him to the police in Kaposvár who promised that they would send a commission to investigate the affair. When the boy returned home that night, he found his parents bound and semiconscious. The commission arrived the following day and announced that unknown persons in Soviet uniforms had committed the robbery.(6)

SOURCES

1. Belgrade, Politika, 29 Jun 52 (article signed by B.D.)
2. Jugopres, Belgrade, Politika, 20 Jul 52
3. Zagreb, Borba, 15 Jul 52
4. Belgrade, Politika, 10 Jul 52
5. Ibid., 30 Jun 52
6. Zagreb, Borba, 2 Jul 52

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